**Amendments to the Claims**:

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) A sheet feeder that feeds a sheet in an image reading apparatus with an image reading part, the sheet feeder comprising:

a drive roller unit that is disposed at a downstream side from the reading part in a sheet feed direction and includes a drive roller; and

a driven roller unit that includes a driven roller that presses against the drive roller;

wherein a coefficient of friction of an outer layer of the driven roller to a sheet to be fed is smaller than a coefficient of friction of an outer layer of the drive roller to the sheet, ~~and~~

wherein an axis of the drive roller is disposed perpendicular to the sheet feed direction, and an axis of the driven roller is disposed on a slant with respect to the sheet feed direction~~,~~

wherein the driven roller unit includes a plurality of driven roller segments that are arranged symmetrically on both sides of a center of the width of the sheet to be fed, and axes of the segments of the driven roller are arranged and inclined symmetrically on both sides of the center of the width of the sheet to be fed, and

wherein the axes of the segments of the driven roller unit arranged on one side of the center of the width of the sheet to be fed are aligned on each side of the center of the width of the sheet to be fed.

2. (Canceled)

3. (Currently Amended) The sheet feeder according to claim [2] 1, wherein the axes of the segments of the driven roller are arranged such that an end portion of each axis far

from the center of the width of the sheet to be fed is on an upstream side in the sheet feed direction and an end portion of each axis close to the center of the width of the sheet to be fed is on a downstream side in the sheet feed direction.

4. (Canceled)

5. (Canceled)

6. (Currently Amended) The sheet feeder according to claim [4] 1, wherein the plurality of the segments of the driven roller is placed out of alignment such that the segments of the driven roller on a side far from the center of the width of the sheet are arranged on an upstream side in the sheet feed direction, and the segments of the driven roller on a side close to the center of the width of the sheet are arranged on the downstream side in the sheet feed direction.

7. (Currently Amended) The sheet feeder according to claim [2] 1, wherein the driven roller unit includes an urging member that urges the segments of the driven roller toward the drive roller, and the urging member urges the segments of the driven roller independently at least on ~~the~~ both sides of the center of the width of the sheet to be fed.

8. (Original) The sheet feeder according to claim 1, further comprising a conveying roller pair at an upstream side from the reading part in the sheet feed direction, wherein a sheet conveying path from the conveying roller pair to a pairing of the drive roller and the driven roller is curved.

9. (Original) The sheet feeder according to claim 1, wherein the axis of the driven roller is inclined at an angle of 1° to 3° with respect to the width of the sheet to be fed.

10. (Currently Amended) The sheet feeder according to claim [2] 1, wherein the drive roller unit has a plurality of segments of the drive roller of the same number as the segments of the driven roller.

11. (Currently Amended) A downstream sheet conveying mechanism for transporting a fed recording medium from an operation site, the downstream sheet conveying mechanism comprising:

a first drive shaft perpendicular to a feed direction of the recording medium;

a drive roller disposed on the first drive shaft;

a second drive shaft having at least two segments, each segment inclined relative to the first drive shaft; and

at least one driven roller mounted to each segment of the second drive shaft~~,~~

wherein the second drive shaft has four segments, the two innermost segments inclined relative to the first drive shaft and the two outermost segments parallel to the first drive shaft.

12. (Original) The downstream sheet conveying mechanism according to claim 11, wherein the inclination is in a range of 1-3°.

13. (Original) The downstream sheet conveying mechanism according to claim 11, wherein the drive roller has a coefficient of friction relative to the recording medium greater than a coefficient of friction of the driven rollers relative to the recording medium.

14. (Currently Amended) The downstream sheet conveying mechanism according to claim 13, wherein the drive roller is composed of a plurality of segments equal in number to a number of driven rollers, a driven roller and a segment of the drive roller comprising a conveying pair.

15. (Original) The downstream sheet conveying mechanism according to claim 11, wherein the inclination places a centermost end of a second drive shaft segment one of more upstream and more downstream in the recording medium feed direction than the first drive shaft and the other end of such second drive shaft segment one of more downstream and more upstream than the first drive shaft.

16. (Canceled)

17. (Canceled)

18. (Currently Amended) A processing device, that uses a transported medium for one of reading and printing an image, having a downstream sheet conveying mechanism, comprising:

a first drive shaft perpendicular to a feed direction of the medium;

a drive roller disposed on the first drive shaft;

a second drive shaft having at least two segments, each segment inclined relative to the first drive shaft; and

at least one driven roller mounted to each segment of the second drive shaft~~,~~

wherein the inclination places a centermost end of second drive shaft segment one of more upstream and more downstream in the medium feed direction than the first drive shaft and the other end of such second drive shaft segment one of more downstream and more upstream than the first drive shaft.

19. (Original) The processing device according to claim 18, wherein the inclination is in a range of 1-3° and the drive roller has a coefficient of friction relative to the medium greater than a coefficient of friction of the driven rollers relative to the medium.

20. (Canceled)